

# LETTER

TO THE

*Authors of the Answers to the Case of the  
Allegiance due to Sovereign Princes,  
stated and resolved.*

By Dr. WILLIAM SHERLOCK.

*By a Gentleman of the Communion of the Church of England.*

Gentlemen,

I Have with a little commotion of mind (as who is able to exercise a Stoical Apathie in great Provocations) observed all your motions for the two last Years; And although I did not expect any great degrees of temper from such Men when they had got the Reins loose and the Bit between the Teeth; yet I thought at last the meer shame of saying the same things so often over and over again, would have put a stop to your Career. But alas, nothing will satisfy some Men who having been a long time restrained from venting their beloved Principles, think they can never take liberty enough when they once have it.

The Principles of the Church of England, or those of the Professors of that Religion which is by Law established, have ever been thought so advantageous to Government in general, and to our Monarchy in particular, that the late King, when he disclaimed her Communion, gave that for his reason why he would Protect and Defend her and her

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her Children; and it had been well for him if he had not been put upon other Methods by designing Men.

Their present Majesties have however made the same Profession, and that not only verbally, but in their Coronation Oath have given us the most Sacred Assurances, that they will preserve that Protestant Religion which is by Law Established. Others are indeed by Law tolerated, but still that is the Religion that is Sworn to be preserved, protected, and defended, whilst all the rest are only allowed a bare Indemnity.

Why then must every one that has sooner or later submitted to their Majesties, and have heartily and sincerely taken the Oaths of Allegiance to them, be pelted by a parcel of Pamphleteers, only for Assigning such Reasons for it as are consistent with the Doctrines of the Church of *England*, and the Practice of the Primitive Church in the like Circumstances? There has scarce appeared one Piece that was written by those of our Communion for the satisfaction of the *Non-swearers*, but there has presently been published a swarm of virulent and malicious Pamphlets against it, written no doubt by Their Majesties special Friends, for they all pretend to be zealous *Williamites*, great promoters of the late Revolution, the first that were in Arms against the late King. Ay, and it may be if the truth were examined, and they would but vouchsafe to set their Names to their Books, we might find them as busily Plotting against *Charles* the First, and *Charles* the Second, as *James* the Second; and against him too in the *Monmouth* Invasion, as well as in the late Revolution.

Well, but the late good Service has atoned for all their former Crimes, and they have not only merited a Pardon for all that is past, but a Reward too, and much good may it do them. I neither envy their good Fortunes, nor would purchase the best of them at the same Price, and with the same Hazards; so that they need never fear I will be their Rival.

But what need is there of all this? Is the late Revolution here in *England* of that nature, that those that have complied with it may justify their so doing upon the Principles of the Church of *England*, or is it not? If we can justify it upon our own Principles, why are they offended? If we cannot, what harm have we done them? Is any Man discontented that the number of his Friends and Assistants are increased by Men of various Interests and Principles, who have the same great design to carry on that he had? Are not all the Princes in Christendom at this time united against *France*, notwithstanding their different Principles and Interests in other things?

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But then if it is not justifiable upon the Principles of the Church of England, but we must renounce our Principles before we can become the Loyal Subjects of King *William* and Queen *Mary*, which the *Non-swearers* pretend, and these *Williamites* back them in; then is the late Revolution condemned not only by the *Non-swearers*, but by the *Williamites* also; For if it is innocent it may be justified by our Principles, and if it is not, their Principles will no more justify it than ours will. And I am sure it is not for their Majesties Interest to have the World think they have done that which cannot be justified upon the Principles of that Church which they have sworn to defend, and of which they profess themselves to be. And which is more, of that Church which is the greatest part of the Nation, and of which the far greatest part of the *Nobility, Gentry, Sword-men, and Crown-men* of the Nation profess themselves Members; all which are by these Men declared Rebels and Traitors by their own Principles, if what they say is true.

Here is a Mystery at the bottom of all this, and it is not impossible to set it in so good a Light that no Man will wonder at it, tho' perhaps it will not be my good fortune to do it, but however I will try if I can; and if I offend them by it, the care is before-hand taken, and I am resolv'd not to be over-much concerned, tho' I expect a swarm of venomous Insects about my Ears for it.

When this Revolution was began in *Holland*, it was the great care of these Gentlemen to win over the Church of *England* men by all the Arts of Wheedle and Courtship that was possible, and the Advice then was instead of reminding or upbraiding them with the opposition and rancour which they expressed against our Persons, Principles, and Ways, let there be no Language heard from us but what may declare the Joy we have in our selves for their Conversion, and the intire Trust and Confidence we put in them. And a little after; It were the height of Wickedness, as well as the most prodigious Folly, to imagine that the Conformists have abandon'd all Fidelity to God, and cast off all care of themselves, and their Country, upon a mistaken judgment of being Loyal and Obedient to the King. They know as well as any, that the giving to Cæsar the things that are Cæsars, lays them under no Obligation of surrendering unto him the things that are Gods; nor of sacrificing unto the Will of the Sovereign the Privileges reserved unto the People, by the Fundamental Rules of the Constitution, and by the Statutes of the Realm. And they understand as well as others, that the Laws of the Land are the only Measures of the Princes Authority, and of the Subjects Fealty; and where they give him no right to Command, they lay them under no tye to Obey. The ill effects of

*Animosities amongst Protestants*, pag. 16. Thus sweetly the *Sirens* allured us then; And because what they said was true, we had reason to believe it was sincere, if we had not known the nature of the Animals.

But so soon as ever the Work was done, and the late King was shipp'd for *France*, all this Courtship was out of Doors: these Church of *England* Men, these Conformists, were the Men of Arbitrary Principles, the Men that had endangered the Liberties of *England*, and the Protestant Religion, by their Doctrine of *Passive Obedience*, or *Non-resistance*; and all that they had said before was now forgot: and tho' the Papists were pardon'd, and the old Parliament Rebels rewarded, there was no quarter to be allowed to the Surrenders of Charters, the Opposers of the Bill of Exclusion, the Defeaters of the *Monmouth* Invasion.

In *Scotland* the Episcopal Party sat still and would have no hand in the Revolution, and we see what followed, and tho' they have since made dreadful Complaints, and expressed a great resentment of their Folly in suffering this Blessing to be stolen from them, yet they have not yet been able to obtain a place for Repentance, tho' they have sought it with Tears. In *England* it was otherwise, we were in expectation of a Parliament before the Revolution began, and the Members in all places were fixed, and it was not possible of a sudden to change them; and this case would admit of no delay, so that most of the Members were Church of *England* Men, and there was no helping it. This was a great Obstacle to the Designs of these Men, and have embittered all their Joys, and made them so uneasy and dissatisfied that they can hardly relish what they have got, because they had not all they expected.

They were very zealous to have got the Act for taking the Oaths to Their Majesties limited to a very short time, that Men having but a little time to bethink them, might more generally have refused them, as they did in *Scotland*; but the six Months that was allowed (much against their wills) was so well employed, that the Number of the *Non-swearers* was very small in comparison, and if these very Men had not made it their business to traduce all that took the Oaths as *Apostates*, *time-servers*, and *perjured Men*; perhaps it would have been much less than it was.

And whereas the great Objection against taking the Oaths was raised from the *Doctrine of Passive Obedience*, or *Non-resistance*, whoever endeavoured the Reconciling the taking of the Oaths with that Doctrine, was sure to have all these zealous *Williamites* (as they called



led themselves) on his Neck, as well as the *Non-swearers*, and there was nothing in the World they desired so much as to have it thought that whoever took the Oath to their Majesties, did *ipso facto* renounce that Doctrine, as Impious and Heretical.

There were some few that did not take the Oaths till the six Months were almost expired; others did not take them till the next six Months were almost out; and some few have taken them since, as they were able to satisfy themselves. Now all these have been affronted to the utmost degree by all the Party; and every Man that takes the Oath raiseth a new Clamour; so that it is apparent to all the World, some Men fear nothing more than that there should be no *Non-swearers*. That is, they are afraid that all the Nation should unite in Their Majesties Interest.

There were some few that took the Oaths before they were satisfied, to keep their Places, and have since scandalously disputed against the rest, as far as they durst; and this they took up as another opportunity to defame all the rest. And if any Man appeared against them, presently he was a swearing *Jacobite*; nay, we are made believe, all the Church of *England* Men that have taken the Oaths are in their Hearts *Jacobites*, which is now the scoulding term for the title of *Papist in Masquerade*, is now superannuated and grown out of Fashion.

The *Asheists*, the *Hobbits*, the *Commonwealth-men* are all joyned in one cry against the *Innocent Doctrine of Non-resistance*, for very different ends I confess, but with equal noise and boldness; and Men value themselves very much if they have had the good fortune never to have been tainted with this dangerous Doctrine, especially if they were such as have ever lived in the Communion of the Church of *England*. Nay, he that was a *Trimmer* in the times of *Charles the Second*, concerned in the *Whig Plot*, or the *Monmouth Invasion*, the *Act of Exclusion*, or the *41 Rebellion*, thinks it is a matter of great Reputation, or good Qualification, to recommend him to the esteem of all *sober Men*; whilst he that was true to the Princes that have Reigned over us, durst not once mention his Loyalty upon pain of being thought unworthy of all Trust or Regard.

Now what is the meaning of all this? why all this pains to run down a Doctrine that never did nor can do any harm, but when it is abused by ill Men to ill purposes? And yet it never did them any service neither that most pretended to use it, to our damage. Are they afraid our present King or Queen will make use of it to the Ruine of those Liberties they have so lately Established by Act of  
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Parliament? No, this is certainly none of their fears; but these Men have something else in Prospect. The Monarchy, the Government, both in Church and State, are not yet in the condition and state they would bring them: they well foresee that if Their Majesties should be once settled in the same degree of Power and Majesty with their Predecessors, and that be backed by the whole Church of *England*, supported and confirmed by the old Loyal Doctrine, and bound upon the Consciences of Men as it was before; when ever they shall have occasion to repeat their old Contrivances for the Undermining or Unsettling it, here will be a powerful and a numerous Party ready formed to oppose them, and therefore now whilst the Crown is engaged in a Dangerous and Expensive War, they are to make use of the opportunity at home to make a strong Party to deal with it so soon as the times will permit them.

I suppose there is no Man that is in his right Wits, but must see that it is Their Majesties Interest that all their Protestant Subjects should Unite as one Man in their Interest and Service. This was made the great reason of the Tolerating the Dissenters, and this has ever been the Aim and Design of all wise Princes and States; and our Enemies have shewn us how much they fear it, by their restless endeavours to Divide and Disunite us at home, which they seem to depend more upon than upon any Forces they can send against us; and the Prospect of this was the thing that finally prevailed upon *James* the Second to leave the Nation, viz. that we might fall into Confusion; so that upon the matter, all the World has declared that Disunion and Division at home is beneficial to our Enemies, and destructive to us.

Well, then if it be so necessary we should Unite, upon what terms shall we do it? Renounce the Doctrine of Non-resistance and Passive Obedience, the Title of King *James* both before and after his Desertion, and all the Merits of your Church of *England* Loyalty in standing by the Crown of *England* in the worst of times, and then we shall Unite. Your humble Servant Gentlemen; Will nothing less do? Are these terms to be imposed by a tolerated Party, on that which blessed be God is yet by Law Established? I hope we may Unite upon much easier terms than these; if we may not, some body is to blame, and in due time will wish they had been wiser.

For my part, I believe our now most Gracious Sovereigns King *William* and Queen *Mary* are both *de jure* and *de facto*, as Lawful King and Queen of *England*, by an Hereditary Right which commenced from the time the late King *James* left the Throne, tho' it was not declared

clared till the Twelfth of February following, as ever late upon the Throne. But then I neither can nor ever will renounce the Doctrine of Passive Obedience or Non-resistance rightly understood, nor can I yield that King *James* did forfeit his Crown, or that I was absolved from my Allegiance before he wilfully threw it up and deserted the Nation; but I believe I am not equally bound to stand by a Prince that Governed at the rate he did, as I should have been to stand by one that Governed according to his Laws and his Coronation Oath. So that no Man in the Nation is or possibly can be better satisfied in Their Majesties Title and Government than I am; no Man was sooner satisfied than I was; no Man has more Heartily served them than I have done, nor more disinterestedly, for I have got nothing by the change, but I have lost much.

But then, after all my Principles are the same they were, my Allegiance has descended in the same manner to King *William* and Queen *Mary* as it did to *Charles* the Second and *James* the Second, not altered in the least in the degree or reason of it. They were in their times the Ministers of God, and the lawful and undoubted Sovereigns of the *English* Nation, and so are these: The same God that set up *Charles* the Second, and *James* the Second, when so great a part of the Nation did what they could to have the first of them *Admired*, and the second *Excluded*; the same God, I say, has by his Providence set King *William* and Queen *Mary* upon the Throne; and by his Grace I will bear the same Faith and Allegiance to them as I did to the former; and for the same cause.

Now if some Men are not so well satisfied as I am, but think they are still bound to persist in their Allegiance to the late King, because he is not dead, nor has yet made a formal surrender of his Crown to Their now Majesties, what is this to me? must I renounce my Principles because others that have imbraced the same Principles are not of the same Mind that I am? Or shall we of the Church of *England*, that have heartily and sincerely sworn Allegiance to King *William* and Queen *Mary*, and defended them with our Lives and Fortunes; shall we, I say, be Rejected, Traduced, Libelled in Print, only because we persisted in our Allegiance to King *James*; not only as long as he used us well, but as long as he would stay? Surely they that gave such Testimony of their Loyalty to one Prince, will deserve a little Regard and Protection from another who succeeds in the same Right. Their now Majesties are of our own Religion, they were our Deliverers out of a most uncomfortable state, the hopes we had that they should one day be so was our greatest Comfort in all

our Distresses; and they have accordingly delivered us sooner than we did expect, or perhaps durst wish. And now after all this, what reason is there that any body should suspect, that we that were ever Loyal to all their Predecessors, should after all the Assurances that one Man can possibly give another, be still false dissembling Hypocrites, and Traitors to God and them: And in the mean time, others that have been Disloyal to all their Predecessors, that have been Plotting and Contriving the Ruine of the *English* Monarchy for above Fifty Years together, should engross all the Loyalty from us!

Gentlemen, If you are offended with this plain dealing, you can thank no body but your selves, you have endeavoured to satisfy your Party by your Arguments, such as they are, and altho' I could not approve of them, yet I never set Pen to Paper against them, because they seemed to be well meant for Their Majesties Service, and if they did not satisfie me, yet they might please some others; and provided Men were brought over to Their Majesties Service, I was contented. But, on the other side, when I produced my Arguments, I had presently a parcel of your snarling Vermin at my Heels, which I despised. And when the learned Dr. *Sherlock* came forth upon the same Charitable Design, you treated him ten times worse than you did me; and because I perceive he has not thought fit to give you any Answer, I have sent this short Letter to let you know, that if the Coast is clear, and I may have the liberty of the Press as well as you, I will, one after another, send every one of you my Remarks and Objections against what you have written against that great good Man. And in the mean time I am,

Your, &c.

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